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The Friday Letter

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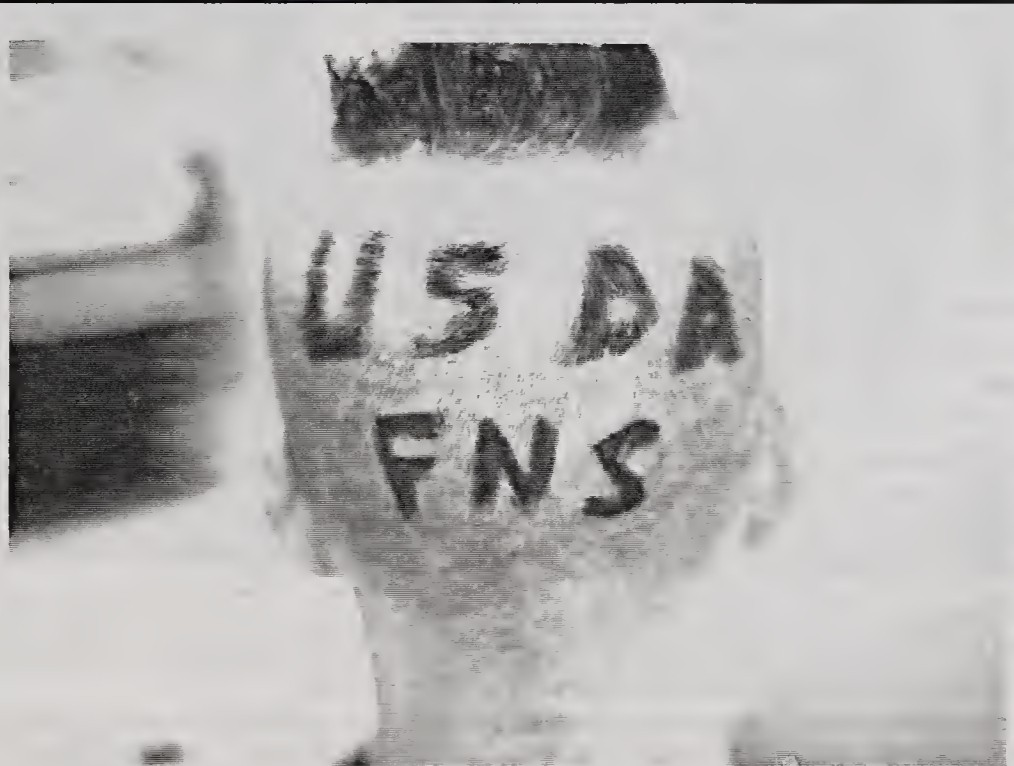
ON THE HILL...

by Bob Beard

On July 17, 1991, the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee marked-up and reported out S. 243, the "Older Americans Act Reauthorization Amendments of 1991". This bill is a comprehensive 4-year reauthorization for the Older Americans Act, including the provisions dealing with USDA commodities. Two major features of this bill are increases in the authorization ceilings for the USDA commodities or cash, and indexing the per meal payment level to inflation. The authorizations are set at \$220 million in FY92, \$235 million in FY93, \$250 million for 1994 and \$265 million for FY95. The bill is now ready for action on the Senate floor.,

In other recent actions in Congress, the House has completed its work on our 1992 appropriations. The House passed H.R. 2698 on June 26. Some of the highlights include funding for the Food Stamp Program at the President's requested level but with a reserve of only \$1.5 billion rather than the requested \$2.5 billion. The total is \$21.15 billion. The Child Nutrition Programs appropriation provides for all activities at requested levels, except that \$10 million is appropriated for Nutrition Education and Training, and Federal Review is set at \$4.083 million.

For the WIC Program, the House appropriation level is \$2.6 billion, which is \$27 million above the President's request. The House also provided more funds for CSFP with an appropriation of \$91.3 million. The FPA account was not funded at the level requested, with a \$12.2 million shortfall; no funding was provided for the FNS Food Stamp Anti-Fraud Unit, although OIG would receive \$2 million for this function.



Kevin Sawyer, a coop student through Northeastern University in Boston, lamented his departure from NERO by having a testament to his dedication carved into the back of his head. Kevin hopes to return to NERO, with a regular haircut, next January, to continue his work with the food stamp compliance management unit.



Bertini Headlines New York State WIC Breastfeeding Conference

On June 24, Assistant Secretary Bertini spoke to more than 300 attendees at the New York WIC Breastfeeding Conference held in Albany. The conference, partially funded by a FNS grant, brought together New York WIC staff and supporters to discuss tools and strategies for promoting breastfeeding.

"Empowerment is what we're about today," the Assistant Secretary said, beginning her speech. "The empowerment of women throughout the state of New York and throughout the country." Promoting breastfeeding, she asserted, is promoting empowerment.

"WIC is a basic empowerment tool," Bertini said. "Because in WIC we are teaching moms what kind of food is good for them to eat, what kind of food is good for their children to eat, how to present that food and how to feed it to their child. Breastfeeding is a key part of that empowerment. We're empowering moms by teaching them how to nourish their bodies to nourish their children," Bertini said.

Bertini described a meeting she attended with President Bush where he thanked her and her colleagues for "working to reorient the government to better serve the needs of individuals." She pointed out that the WIC Program, in promoting breastfeeding, was a shining example of this, serving the needs of individual mothers.

"By working together," Bertini said, "we can help not only empower that woman, but empower her children and her family for many, many years to come."



(L to R) NERO SFP Director Lynn Wonders, Bronx County WIC Program Coordinator Theresa Landau and Assistant Secretary Bertini are charmed by a darling but unidentified WIC infant attending the New York WIC Breastfeeding Conference. The conference, titled "Breastfeeding: The WIC Connection," featured several workshops conducted by experts in breastfeeding promotion and education.

Speaking personally...

I am sharing with all of you a letter I recently received, because it is for all of us.

I agree with Monique when she says "it is...a pleasure to work with such caring and understanding people at the Food and Nutrition Service."

Not only during Desert Storm, but on a continuing basis, I see FNS employees across the nation helping their fellow employees, their communities, the environment, and more.

It makes me proud to be working for such a fine organization--and that's because of you.



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Food and
Nutrition
Service

Mid-Atlantic
Region

CN 02150
Trenton, NJ 08650

July 22, 1991

Ms. Betty Jo Nelsen
Administrator
Food and Nutrition Service
Room 803
3101 Park Center Drive
Alexandria, Virginia 22302

Dear Ms. Nelsen:

I would like to take this time to thank you and all the employees of FNS for your concern and support while I was away with Desert Shield/Desert Storm. Although my mission was concentrated on Ft. Dix, New Jersey, the mental and physical drain on me was a tremendous task that I had to bear. I must say that it is a big relief to be back and a pleasure to work with such caring and understanding people at the Food and Nutrition Service. Once again thank you.

Sincerely,

Monique C. Brooks
Secretary
Food Stamp Program

FROM THE PROGRAMS...

HQs Financial Management Gets Six New Hires

by Rose McClyde

Since January 1991, Financial Management(FM) has added six new employees to it's rolls. **Kristin Eichenberger** of the Budget Division, and **Diane Carfagno**, **Robin Moffatt**, **Joyce Lawlor**, **Dwayne Grismore**, and **Wendy Weisser** all of the Accounting Division, have been receiving an extensive orientation to USDA and FNS. They have had opportunities to visit several sites that interface with FNS' daily operations and contribute to the performance of FNS' and FM's missions. These include the Treasury Department's Washington Disbursing Center, the Richmond Federal Reserve Bank, USDA's Office of Financial Management, a local WIC clinic and a Food Stamp Coupon issuance point.

These hires resulted after extensive recruitment efforts by Financial Management managers including visits to college campuses and participation in the OPM Job Fair.

Diane Carfagno comes to FNS from the State Department where she worked as a payroll systems specialist. Diane holds a BBA from Pennsylvania State University and is currently pursuing her MBA from Strayer College. She is writing and updating procedures as a Systems Accountant in the Policy and Systems Branch.

Kristin Eichenberger graduated magna cum laude from Youngstown State University in July 1990 with a BA in Psychology. Kristin is assigned



Standing (L to R) Robin Moffatt, Dwayne Grismore, Diane Carfagno. Seated (L to R) Wendy Weisser, Kristin Eichenberger, Joyce Lawlor.

to the Administrative Branch of the Budget Division.

Dwayne Grismore is a native of Houston, Texas and a graduate of Prairie View, A & M University receiving a B. S. degree in Accounting. He earned a Masters in Business Administration (MBA) from the Pennsylvania State University. Dwayne is writing procedures in the financial policies and systems Branch.

Joyce Lawlor is a Certified Public Accountant and member of the AICPA as well as a licensed Public Housing Manager. She has a BS degree in Accounting from Dowling College NY

and a Masters degree in Accounting from C. W. Post College, School of Professional Accountancy, NY. Joyce is assigned to the Policy and Systems Branch, writing financial management procedures.

Robin Moffatt has a B. S. in Accounting from Rutgers University and an MBA in Finance from Seton Hall. She is assigned to the AFMS development project.

Wendy Weisser has a B. S. degree in Business Administration from Robert Morris College, Pittsburgh, PA. She is assigned to the Accounting Operations and Fiscal Services Branch.

More program news...

- FNS sent an issue paper to International Affairs and Commodity Programs Deputy Under Secretary John Campbell concerning the pro's and con's of continuing to purchase cheese for the TEFAP Program next fiscal year. The paper is to be utilized

by the Departments Dairy Task Force. Because of a number of factors, FNS believes peanut butter is a viable alternative to cheese. Although cheese is the most popular item that has ever been offered in TEFAP, that very popularity has created many problems for State and local administrators this year as

demand for chesse has far exceeded supply. In addition, cheese prices have escalated considerably since the start of FY 1991 purchases while peanut butter prices are expected to return to normal levels when the new peanut crop is harvested in the early fall.

AROUND THE COUNTRY...

SERO Holds Annual and Bi-Annual Meetings

Photo and Story by Connie Crunkelton

SERO recently hosted three separate meetings at the same location and time in an effort to squeeze as much as possible out of its travel budget. The annual \$6 Million Club Conference, the annual Southeastern Welfare Commissioners' Meeting and the bi-annual SERO OIC Meeting were all held at alternating or congruent times during the week of June 10 - 14 at Clearwater, Fla.

"Since travel money is tight this year, we wanted to get as much benefit from our travel dollars as possible," said SERO Administrator **Virgil Conrad**. "Some of our employees were pretty worn out before the week was over, but we completed a lot of necessary business and built a good working environment for projects that will carry over to next fiscal year."

The \$6 Million Club is SERO's food stamp error reduction initiative, and its officers are state employees. The club's 1991 officers and state coordinators voted to hold the 1991 conference at Clearwater. The site selection was approved by the board of directors which is comprised of the welfare commissioners in each SERO state. This year's conference was packed with educational and problem-sharing workshops. While tight state travel budgets slightly curtailed participation, attendance was still very good. In several cases, county workers carpooled and attended the conference at their own expense. In addition, FNS and state personnel from other regions also attended.

State budget restrictions even had an impact on attendance at the annual Southeastern Welfare Commissioners' Meeting. However, six of SERO's eight states were represented at a two-day meeting that covered a variety of topics. The commissioners also had the opportunity to meet and work with **Phyllis Gault**, Deputy Administrator for the Food Stamp Program, and **Tim**



Fed-State relations in action. Seated (L to R) Don Winsted, FL; Phyllis Gault, Virgil Conrad, Jack Boozer, Mary Deyampert, NC, Mary Ross, MS. Standing (L to R) Tim O'Connor, Mike Robinson, KY, Andy Hornsby, AL, Doug Greenwell, GA.

O'Connor, director of FSP's Program Development Division.

Several commissioners commented that the highlight of their meeting was the unveiling of SERO's new "Folio" information retrieval system, better known in SERO as the "electronic library." "If this system works half as good as it seems to, learning about Folio will more than justify this trip," said **Mary Ross** who represented the Mississippi Department of Public Welfare.

The bi-annual meeting of SERO's field office staff was a natural tie-in with the \$6 Million Club since the field officers-in-charge (OIC's) benefit from opportunities to interact with State personnel located throughout their respective states. The OIC's also were given a preview of SERO's new information retrieval system since they are regularly called upon to provide up-to-date information not only about Food Stamp Program regs but about other FNS food assistance programs. In addition to meeting with SERO program staffers, the OIC's also met with FS Benefit Redemption Director **Jordan Benderly**, southeastern Compliance Chief **Joe McCormick** and OGC attorney **Mark Stevens**.

Conrad said coordinating three simultaneous meetings isn't for the

faint of heart, but it can be done effectively and at minimal cost. "We probably won't attempt such a big undertaking next year," **Conrad** said. "But I strongly believe the benefits from these meetings merited the effort."

WRO Hires New IRM Chief

by Jeff Hutkoff

Charles (Chuck) Hendricks, a computer support service specialist, has joined the Western Regional Office as the new Information Resource Management Chief.

As a Deputy Program Manager at Amerind Inc. in Washington, D.C., **Hendricks** has spent the previous 10 years providing information systems support to the Department of Defense.

"More than a computer manager, I'm a people manager," says **Hendricks**, "I like to work closely with the staff so I can better understand their concerns."

A house remodeler in his spare time and an avid jogger, **Hendricks** says he's excited by the challenges as well as the learning opportunities WRO presents.

AROUND THE COUNTRY...(cont.)

MARO RA Gives WIC Award to Governor

Story and Photo by MARO Public Affairs Staff

MARO Regional Administrator **Chris Martin** presented Delaware Governor **Michael N. Castle** with a USDA Food and Nutrition Service award for the state's innovative cost saving efforts in the WIC Program.

Delaware's WIC Program was recognized for implementing the nation's first competitively-bid retail vendor authorization system. As a direct result of cost savings realized through Project SAVE (Selecting Authorized Vendors Efficiently), Delaware is now serving the 700 women and children who were previously on the WIC waiting list.

At a press conference in Wilmington, **Martin** told the Governor and State Health and Social Services Secretary **Thomas P. Eichler** that, "Delaware has provided a model which we are actively encouraging other states to emulate. The concept behind Project SAVE is a simple one, giving WIC participants ready access to retail stores that provide approved foods at the lowest possible cost."



Martin is being interviewed by a local TV station about the award for the WIC Program.



On a recent visit to the Twin Cities, MRWO Regional Administrator Monroe Woods and staff met with State commissioners of health, education, welfare and agriculture. While in the Capitol, St. Paul, Woods met with Mayor James Scheibel to review federal food assistance efforts. The Mayor expressed his interest in assisting FNS in promoting federal food programs, especially farmers market food stamp authorization. (L to R) Monroe Woods, Mayor Scheibel, mayoral aide Ellen Bialas, St. Paul WIC Director Mary Peick, MWRO Child Nutrition Director Terry Bowman and MWRO Food Stamp Program Director Dave Mikelson.

Friday Letter Vacancy Listing by Vacancy Number

JOB TITLE	AREA OF CONSID.	SERIES	GRADE	CLOSING	VACANCY NUMBER	OFFICE LOCATION
Personnel Automation Spec _ _ _ (A)		GS/GM-0301	12/13	07/30/91	91-77*	PED
Spvry Budget Analyst _ _ _ _ (A)		GM-0560	14	07/29/91	91-95**	BUD
Contract Specialist _ _ _ _ (G-W)		GS-1102	11	07/30/91	91-104	ASD
Computer Programmer Analyst _ (A)		GS-0334	13	07/30/91	91-105	IRMD
Supervisory Management Analyst (A)		GM-0343	14	08/12/91	91-106***	IRMD
Secretary (Typing) _ _ _ _ (A)****		GS-0318	5	08/19/91	91-108	PID
Secretary (Typing) _ _ _ _ (A)****		GS-0318	6	08/19/91	91-109	BUD
Nutritionist _ _ _ _ _ (A)		GS-0630	11/12	08/19/91	91-110	NTSD
Spvry Food Prog Spec _ _ _ _ (A)		GM-0120	13	08/19/91	91-111	FDD
(Temp Appt/Prom NTE 1 Year)						
Food Program Specialist _ _ _ (FNS-HQ)		GS-0120	12	08/19/91	91-112	FDD
Food Program Specialist _ _ _ _ (A)		GS-0120	12	08/19/91	91-112A	FDD

AREA OF CONSIDERATION

(A) - All Sources
 (FNS-HQ) . . - FNS Headquarters Wide
 (FNS-N) . . - Food and Nutrition Service-Nationwide
 (HNIS-W) . . - Human Nutrition Info. Service - Wide
 (G-W) - Government-Wide

* Reannounced due to change in title and series, from Management Analyst, GS/GM-0343.

relocation expenses will not be paid.

** Reannounced

*** Extends closing date, amends criterion "B" and replaces criteria "D" and "F"

****Relocation Expenses will not be paid

OFFICE LOCATION

ASD Administrative Services Division
 BUD Budget Division
 FDD Food Distribution Division
 IRMD . . . Information Resource Management Division
 NTSD . . . Nutrition and Technical Services Division
 PED Personnel Division
 PID Program Information Division

**IF ANYONE IS INTERESTED IN PLAYING
 BRIDGE AT NOON (DURING LUNCH) PLEASE
 CALL THE HEALTH UNIT AT 756-6000, OR
 STOP BY ROOM 218.**

FROM THE HEALTH UNIT...

- Blood Drive August 7 & 8
- New CPR Video "The Way to Save Lives" is available from the Health Unit
- Watch for upcoming programs: First Aid Class, Stress Management Class with Dr. Ann Ladd, Fall Health Fair
- Look for President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports Award Program Awardees in an upcoming issue of the Friday Letter...several of your co-workers have completed the program...YOU CAN TOO!

Darlene Barnes, Editor and Desktop Design

Pamela D. Faith, HQs Photography and Desktop Design

The Friday Letter is published every two weeks by the Public Information Staff of the Food and Nutrition Service. To update your mailing address or to alter the number of copies you receive, please mail your changes to FNS Public Information Staff, 3101 Park Center Drive, Room 819, Alexandria, Virginia 22302.

Upcoming Events...

August

- 2** National Cattlemen's Association Mid-Year Conference, Denver, CO
- 5** Breastfeeding Promotion Consortium Mtg., Radisson Hotel, Alexandria, VA
- 7-8** BLOOD DRIVE, sign up with Nurse Perkey!
- 19-23** Advanced Training for EEO Counselors, at Headquarters

Park Center Toastmasters Club meets every Tues. 12:00-1:00 in the 4th Floor Conference Room